

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 19478 151554Z
ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SMS-01 SS-15 SSO-00 INR-05 INRE-00
VO-01 CA-01 HA-02 SES-01 /035 W
-----098636 151607Z /44
O 151545Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5588

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 19478

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CVIS, SREF, UR (OVSEPYAN, ELIZA)
SUBJECT: WALK-IN: ELIZA OVSEPYAN

REFS: (A) STATE 204801, (B) MOSCOW 19339

1. EMBASSY HAS OBTAINED SOME ADDITIONAL BACK-
GROUND ON ELIZA OVSEPYAN'S PROBLEMS. NEWLY
ARRIVED EMBASSY ADMIN COUNSELOR, JOHN CONDAYAN,
WHO SPEAKS ARMENIAN, CHATTED WITH HER FOLLOWING
AUGUST 14 TELEPHONE CALL WITH U.S. RELATIVES.
SHE REITERATED TO HIM HER DETERMINATION TO STAY
IN EMBASSY UNTIL SHE RECEIVES EXIT PERMISSION,
NO MATTER HOW LONG IT TAKES.

2. DURING ENSUING CONVERSATION WITH ADMIN
COUNSELOR, SHE CONFIDED THAT FAMILY PROBLEMS HAVE
BEEN MAJOR FACTOR LEADING TO PRESENT PLIGHT.
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SHE STATED THAT AFTER HER MARRIAGE, THE COUPLE
LIVED IN HER PARENTS' HOUSE. JUST BEFORE
MRS. OVSEPYAN'S PARENTS AND SISTER LEFT YEREVAN
FOR THE U.S., THEY SOLD THEIR HOUSE AND MRS.
OVSEPYAN AND HER FAMILY (HUSBAND AND TWO CHILDREN)
HAD TO MOVE INTO HIS PARENTS' HOME. ACCORDING TO
MRS. OVSEPYAN, THE SITUATION THERE HAS BEEN

INTOLERABLE BECAUSE OF BITTER FAMILY FIGHTS AND BECAUSE HER HUSBAND'S SISTER-IN-LAW, WHO RESIDES IN THE SAME HOUSE, IS MENTALLY DISTURBED (AND HAS BEEN DECLARED LEGALLY INSANE, ACCORDING TO MRS. OVSEPYAN).

3. MRS. OVSEPYAN REPORTED ALSO THAT ALTHOUGH EXIT PERMISSION HAS BEEN RECEIVED, TRAVEL PASSPORT WAS REFUSED BY OVIR ON GROUNDS THAT SINCE HUSBAND'S FAMILY (I.E., WIDOWED FATHER AND BROTHER) LIVE IN YEREVAN, THEIR DEPARTURE WOULD VIOLATE PRINCIPLE OF "FAMILY REUNIFICATION". ELIZA STATED THAT IN ORDER TO OBIATE THAT ARGUMENT, SHE HAS TRIED TO FILE FOR DIVORCE BUT THIS IS RUNNING INTO BUREAUCRATIC OBSTACLES.

4. LAST WEEK, MRS. OVSEPYAN CAME TO MOSCOW TO TRY TO PERSUADE THE ALL-UNION OVIR TO FACILITATE HER CASE. IT WAS WHEN THAT ORGANIZATION HAVE HER THE RUN-AROUND THAT SHE REPORTEDLY CAME IN DESPERATION TO THE EMBASSY TO TRY TO RESOLVE HER PROBLEMS.

5. MRS. OVSEPYAN ALSO TOLD ADMIN COUNSELOR THAT VOA ARMENIAN ANNOUNCER SOUREN (PHONETIC SPELLING OF GIVEN NAME) IS A RELATIVE (APPARENTLY CONFIDENTIAL

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A DISTANT ONE). SHE ASKED THAT APPEAL FOR ASSISTANCE BE TRANSMITTED TO HIM ON A CONFIDENTIAL BASIS. DEPARTMENT MAY WISH ON STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL BASIS TO CHECK WHETHER HE HAS ANY SUGGESTIONS ON DEALING WITH THIS MATTER.

6. WITH REGARD TO PHONE CALLS FROM U.S. RELATIVES, EMBASSY BELIEVES THEY MAY HAVE SERVED THEIR PURPOSE IN DEMONSTRATING TO MRS. OVSEPYAN SUPPORT SHE IS RECEIVING FROM BOTH FAMILY AND U.S. GOVERNMENT. WE BELIEVE THAT IT MAY NOW BE PRUDENT TO DISCOURAGE FURTHER TELEPHONE CALLS IN ORDER TO INSTILL A SENSE OF ISOLATION IN MRS. OVSEPYAN AND HENCE, WILLINGNESS TO LEAVE EMBASSY. WITH THIS IN MIND, WE HAVE INSTITUTED A POLICY OF STRICTLY LIMITED CONTACT BY EMBASSY PERSONNEL (ALTHOUGH WE CANNOT, OF COURSE, HINDER ACCESS BY CORRESPONDENTS OR OTHER PERSONS COMING INTO THE CONSULAR SECTION LOBBY DURING NORMAL WORKING HOURS.) WE THINK THAT A GROWING SENSE OF ISOLATION, INTENSIFIED BY THE PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN KEEPING HER TWO YOUNG SONS IN

CONFINEMENT HERE, WILL EVENTUALLY CONVINCE
HER TO LEAVE. TOON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: WALK INS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MOSCOW19478
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780333-0951
Format: TEL
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780863/aaaacaov.tel
Line Count: 118
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: f5018663-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS, STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS, STADIS
Reference: 78 STATE 204801, 78 MOSCOW 19339
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1737287
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: WALK-IN: ELIZA OVSEPYAN
TAGS: CVIS, SREF, UR, (OVSEPYAN, ELIZA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f5018663-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014